LEE MASS

Leicester. Mass,
July 3. 1865.

Dear Burleigh,

As I do not expect to write you any more letters, boring or otherwise, as to the American A. S. Soc'y's Reports, I will just say that by the election of C. K. Whipple as Corresponding Sec'y of the Soc'y, and of an Exec. Comtee with whom I was not willing to act as representing the Am'n. A. S. Soc'y, — So little of good sense & judgment had they, as individuals, manifested in forwarding the Anti Sl: Cause during the previous 12 months (I speak of the majority of them), — that whole subject of the Report-writing, &c. has passed entirely out of my hands, nor can I say what the new Ex: Comtee may design in regard to that subject.

I have another reason for writing. In a letter which I wrote to you on the 22d. Dec'r. last, I asked you the question,

"What do you think of availability now" —
referring to a sort of triumphant inquiry
you had made of me, at the next previous
N. Eng.d. A. S. Convention. In yours
to me of Dec. 26th, you answer my
question, — i.e. you answer it, as you
undoubtedly understood it to be meant
by me, and I should not suspect you of
wishing to evade a full & direct reply.
— But my inquiry had reference to the
support given by Phillips, the Fosters, Pillsbury
(& others with whom you were especially
acting, and whose course you had been
depending,) to the Cleveland Convention,
John C. Fremont, &c. and the results
of that abortive attempt to cast out
Mr. Lincoln, & expose us to the imminent
hazard, — the almost certain consequence, —
of the triumph of the Chicago Convention,
their candidate & policy. — I wanted
you to tell me what you thought; & how

you felt, about that Cleveland movement; its platform, its 2 candidates, the letter of J.C. Fremont, as representing pure and unmixed Antislavery! Could you have heard, as I heard, Wendell Phillips defend & justify Fremont's letter of acceptance on the ground that "it was an available letter", & "calculated to get Democratic votes", — you would not wonder that I asked, "What do you think of availability now?" When I saw the men, who a few months before were abjuring the doctrine of availability, & rounding periods of scornful denunciation of it, going into the Cleveland Convention with all sorts of poor trash (among some good material), nominating a very mixed ticket, getting up new issues, &c. and defending all on the ground of "availability", I knew not whether to laugh or grieve. One thing I did know — that was no

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"light" for me to follow – there wa
no wisdom there profitable to instruc
me. I had hoped that you w
see through that miserable farce, an
would have abjured it, and that, befo
its own leading friends, distrustful if n
ashamed of it, had recommended i
abandonment. Seeing nothing
& hearing nothing, on the subject, fro
you, – I asked that question; whe
brought me some excellent truisms as t
abolitionists' standing by their principl
but did not clear up the point how th
was done by the supporters of the Chica
Platform & by the opponents of Abraha
Lincoln, – I say these things at
late day, not to trouble you for an answer
against your inclination; but because y/s. of
Dec 26. last has been lying among my "unanswe
letters, and I thought I would clear up to you
own meaning before filing the letter away.
Truly Yrs, S. May Jr.